

Notice of Allowability	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	10/085,083	OSHIMA ET AL.
	Examiner Harry D Wilkins, III	Art Unit 1742

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTO-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. This communication is responsive to after final remarks filed 14 September 2004.
2. The allowed claim(s) is/are 11-26.
3. The drawings filed on 01 March 2002 are accepted by the Examiner.
4. Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) All b) Some* c) None of the:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* Certified copies not received: _____.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.
THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.

5. A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
6. CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
 - (a) including changes required by the Notice of Draftperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
 - 1) hereto or 2) to Paper No./Mail Date _____.
 - (b) including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date _____.

Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).
7. DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

1. Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2. Notice of Draftperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3. Information Disclosure Statements (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08),
Paper No./Mail Date _____
4. Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit
of Biological Material
5. Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6. Interview Summary (PTO-413),
Paper No./Mail Date _____
7. Examiner's Amendment/Comment
8. Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance
9. Other _____.

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with Harris Pitlick on 07 October 2004.

The application has been amended as follows:

Cancel non-elected claims 1-10;

In claim 18, line 2, change the period (".") at the end of the line to a colon (--:--);

In claim 26, line 3, change the second instance of "the" to --a--, in line 4, delete "of claim 1" and replace with: --comprising trivalent chromium and oxalic acid in a molar ratio ranging from 0.5/1 to 1.5/1, wherein the trivalent chromium is present in the form of a water-soluble complex with oxalic acid; and cobalt ions, which are stably present in the processing solution without causing any precipitation due to formation of a metal salt of oxalic acid,--, in line 5, delete the first instance of "the" and replace with "said" and delete "of claim 1".

Reasons for Allowance

The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance: as has been established on the record, Preikschat presents a *prima facie* case of obviousness against the present claims. However, as can be seen in the comparison data presented in the specification (pages 16-18), which references JP 2000-509434 (the JP equivalent

of Preikschat), the use of oxalic acid provides unexpectedly good results over and above the results produced by using malic acid. All of the examples in Preikschat disclose the use of malonic acid and not one example uses oxalic acid. In addition, malonic acid is considered to be the closest prior art to the present claim using oxalic acid since malonic acid (HOOC-CH₂-COOH) is disclosed by Preikschat as being the preferred dicarboxylic acid and is the closest dicarboxylic acid structurally to oxalic acid (HOOC-COOH). Therefore, Applicant has overcome the *prima facie* case of obviousness based on Preikschat based on the unexpected results presented in the specification. In addition, as stated in the Interview Summary dated 23 July 2004, oxalic acid is not within the scope of disclosure of Huvar, and thus, Huvar does not teach the present invention.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Harry D Wilkins, III whose telephone number is 571-272-1251. The examiner can normally be reached on M-Th 10:00am-8:30pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Roy V King can be reached on 571-272-1244. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Harry D Wilkins, III
Examiner
Art Unit 1742

hdw

ROY KING
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 1700